INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Control: 3914
Rec'd: MARCH 5, 1960
6:13 PM

FROM: HABANA

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2259, MARCH 5

NIACT

INTRODUCED BY DAVID SALVADOR, SECRETARY GENERAL OF CTC, FIDEL CASTRO BEGAN TO SPEAK AT 1700 MARCH 5 AT BURIAL CEREMONY FOR VICTIMS OF FRENCH SHIP EXPLOSION. HE ATTRIBUTED EXPLOSION TO SABOTAGE. CARGO WAS BULLETS AND GRENADES; FORMER HAD BEEN UNLOADED ONTO PIER. EXPLOSION OCCURRED DURING UNLOADING OF GRENADES. THERE WAS NO FIRE ON BOARD. NO CASE WAS DROPPED; STEVEDORES WERE EXPERIENCED IN HANDLING EXPLOSIVES; MOREOVER HAD A CASE BEEN DROPPED ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR IT HAVE EXPLODED FROM THIS CAUSE. THIS MORNING AIR FORCE PLANE DROPPED TWO CASES OF IDENTICAL GRENADES FROM HEIGHTS OF 600 AND 800 FEET WITHOUT THEIR EXPLODING. EXPLOSION THEREFORE INTENTIONAL. SINCE IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED IN PRESENCE OF SOLDIERS AND LABORERS OR BY PERSON DISGUISED AS ONE OF THESE, IT HAD TO HAVE BEEN ARRANGED BEFORE ARRIVAL OF SHIP IN HABANA BY SOMEONE ON BOARD. THIRTY-TWO OF SHIPS COMPANY, INCLUDING TWO PASSENGERS WERE ON BOARD WHEN EXPLOSION OCCURRED; FOUR WERE ON SHORE. DETONATOR PROBABLY INSTALLED WHEN CARGO WAS LOADED IN BELGIUM TO EXPLODE WHEN PARTICULAR CASE WAS MOVED DURING UNLOADING. IT IS CONCLUDED FROM INVESTIGATION THAT THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED. CASTRO STILL SPEAKING AND FURTHER REPORTS WILL BE FORWARDED DURING PROGRESS OF SPEECH.

BRADDOCK

NOTE: MR. STEVENSON (CMA) NOTIFIED 3/5-6:35 PM EH

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